ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

for the

Beach Water Transmission Line
Right-of-Way Application

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
MEDFORD DISTRICT
GRANTS PASS RESOURCE AREA

January, 2003

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
MEDFORD DISTRICT

EA COVER SHEET

RESOURCE AREA: Grants Pass FY & REPORT# EA-OR 110 - 2003-12

ACTION/TITLE: Beach Water Transmission Line, Right-of-Way Application
LOCATION: Section 10, T.35S., R.7W.Willamette Meridian

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Chapter 1
Purpose and Need for Action and Alternatives

A. Introduction and Need for Proposal

1. Introduction

The purpose of this environmental assessment (EA) is to assist in the decision-making process by assessing the environmental and human affects resulting from implementing the proposed project and/or alternatives. The EA will also assist in determining if an environmental impact statement (EIS) needs to be prepared or if a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) is appropriate.

This EA tiers to: (1) the Final EIS and Record of Decision (ROD) dated June 1995 for the Medford District Resource Management Plan dated October 1994;and (2) The Final Supplement EIS on the Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl dated February 1994; and (3) the Record of Decision for the Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl and its Attachment A entitled the Standards and Guidelines for Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Owl dated April 13, 1994. (4) Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines dated January 2001.

2. Need for the Proposal

On July 28, 2002 an application was received by the BLM from a private landowner to transport water from the Rogue River, across lands administered by the BLM, to private land located in section 11, T.35S., R.07W. WM. The water transmission line will cross BLM land above ground and will be used for fire protection and irrigation. The applicant has also applied to the State of Oregon for the use of eight acre-feet of water from Lost Creek Reservoir. The State application is pending until the BLM has declared the ROW to transport the water across lands administered by the BLM has been approved. If the BLM application to transport water is denied, the application to the State of Oregon will also be denied.

B. Scoping Issues Relevant to the Proposal

Several issues of potential concern were raised during the Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) scoping phase in the development of the project proposal. They are:

1. Effects of submersible pump on aquatic species
2. Effect of proposed action on recreation
3. Effects of water and power line installation on vegetation

C. Proposed Action and Alternatives

Alternative 1: (No Action Alternative)

This alternative would entail rejecting the application by denying use of BLM administered lands to transport water from the Rogue River to private land.

Alternative 2: (Proposed Action)

The proposed action would allow for the transportation of water from the Rogue River from a point 30 feet west and 780 feet south from the West ¼ corner of section 11, T.35S., R.07W. WM, to private land located in section 11, T.35S., R.07W. SW ¼ SE ¼ Tax Lot Tl200. The pipe will cross BLM administered land in section 10, T.35S., R.07W. The submersible pump will be a Gould 10GB20, 3.59 inches in diameter, 40 inches long, and weighs 67 pounds. The water transmission line will be 1½-inch (inside diameter) polyethylene pipe with a 150 psi rating. There will also be a 2-inch (inside diameter) PVC electrical conduit. The two pipes will be tied together with polyethylene 'snap ties'. The power source for the submersible pump is located on private land on Tl 200.

The pipes will be laid on the surface by hand and no mechanized equipment will be used either in the installation or removal of the system. The submersible pump would be placed in the river April 1 and removed by October 31 of each year.

Project Design Features for the Action Alternative.

Project Design Features (PDFs) are included for the purpose of reducing anticipated adverse environmental impacts identified in the scoping process and which might stem from the implementation of the proposed action. This section outlines these PDFs:

a) The pump design must include a fish screen that meets current National Marines Fisheries Service (NMFS) criteria and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife fish passage regulations as recommended by the IDT Fisheries Biologist

b) The project design will require the applicant to seek and gain approval from Josephine County, Oregon to install the water transmission line through county ROW.

c) As recommended by the IDT Soil Scientist the pump system shall have an automatic shut-off in case of a break in the water line. The shut-off will prevent adverse erosion impacts on BLM administered lands.

d) In the area where the water line crosses the stream course the PVC shall have the sufficient strength to have sag of less than 10% of the total horizontal width of the stream course. The intent is for the PVC, water and electrical, to be strong enough to withstand the weight and not break. The IDT Soil Scientist wants to ensure the water line stays out of the stream course.

Chapter 2
Environmental Consequences

A. Introduction

Only substantive site-specific environmental changes that would result from implementing the proposed action or alternatives are discussed in the chapter. If an ecological component is not discussed, it should be assumed that the resource specialist have considered affects to that component and found the proposed action or alternatives would have minimal or no affects. Similarly, unless addressed specifically, the following were found not to be affected by the proposed action or alternatives: air quality, areas of critical environmental concern (ACEC); cultural or historical resources; Native American religious sites; prime or unique farmlands; floodplains; endangered, threatened or sensitive plant, animal or fish species; water quality; wetlands/riparian zones; wild and scenic rivers; and wilderness areas. In addition, hazardous waste or materials are not involved in the proposed action.

General or "typical" actions of this nature have been previously described in the Medford district Resource Management Plan or the Final Supplement EIS on the Management of Habitat for Late Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl.

The Ocean-Coastal Management Program (Federal Approval-1977) is designed to provide the public with sustainable coastal natural resources. This project is not located within the Oregon Coastal Zone nor is this type project subject to federal consistency review.

B. Site Specific and Cumulative Beneficial or Adverse Effects of the Alternatives

1. No Action Alternative

If this alternative is selected no impacts would occur on the BLM administered lands. Adverse impacts would occur to the applicant if the application were denied. The applicant would be required to develop an alternate source of water for fire protection and irrigation.

2. Proposed Action

No substantive adverse impacts would occur on the public lands if this alternative were selected. No mechanized equipment will be used to place the water and power line above ground and the system will be removed from BLM administered lands each October and be reinstalled each April. The pump design must include a fish screen that meets current National Marines Fisheries Service (NMFS) criteria and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife fish passage regulations.

Chapter 3
Agencies and Persons Consulted

A. Public Involvement

The public involvement and scoping during the processing of this application involved a field visit with Eric Schoblom-Park Ranger, Russell Groves-Acting Realty Specialist and the applicant. The visit occurred in November of 2002. During the visit the applicant showed the proposed location of the line, proposed location of the pump and where the applicant will seek permission from Josephine County, Oregon to place the water and power line through county ROW on Galice County Road.

Other field visits in January of 2003 included a review by Matt Craddock-District Realty Specialist, Lisa Brennan-Cultural Resources, and Dave Maurer-Soil Scientist.

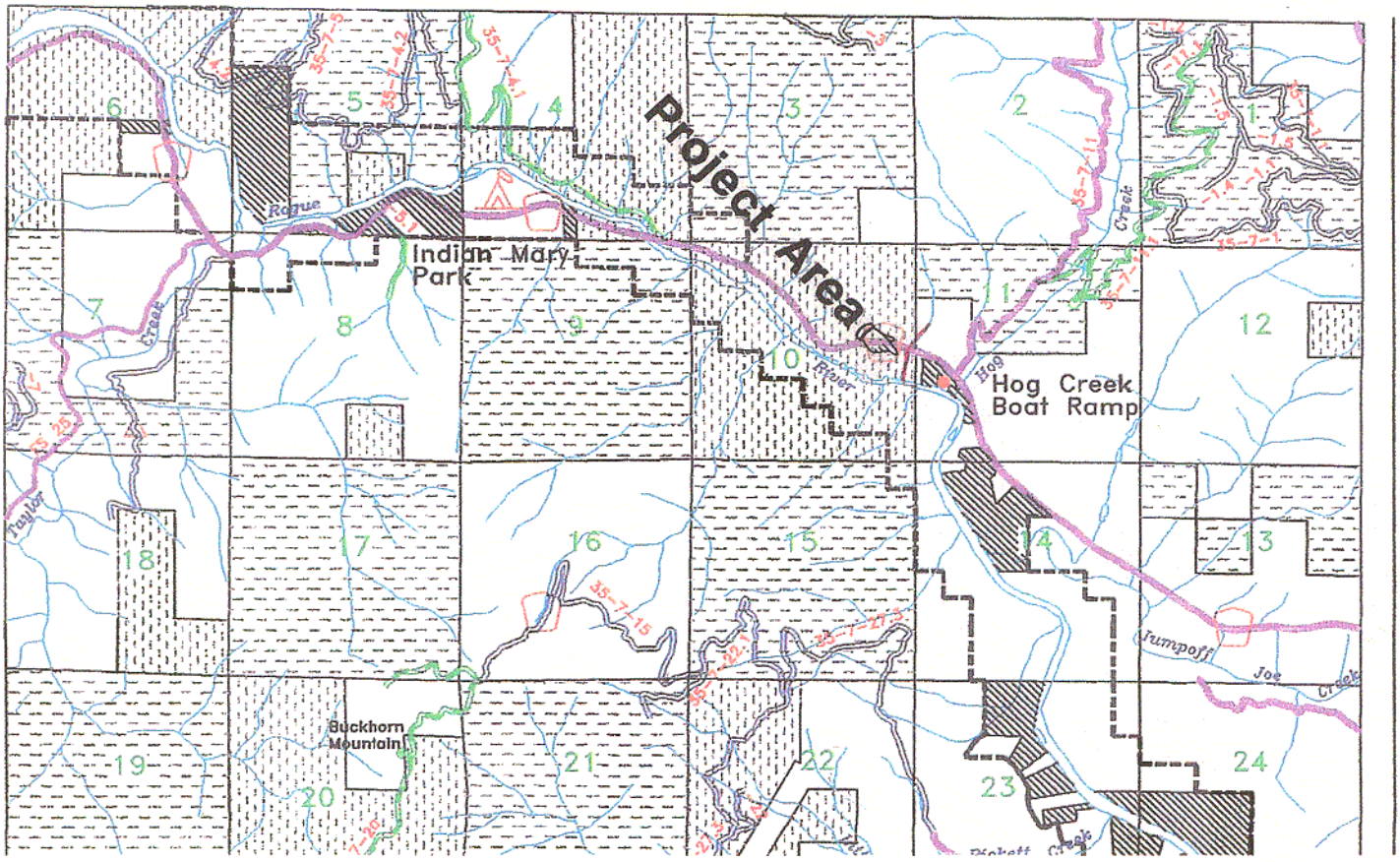
Correspondence was also received from Jerry W. Gainey-Water Processing Technician, State of Oregon. This letter demonstrates that the applicant has file for Water Rights from the State of Oregon to utilize eight acre-feet of water from Lost Creek Reservoir, a tributary of Rogue River.

B. Availability of Document and Comment Procedures

Copies of the EA document will be available for formal public review in the BLM Medford District Office. Written comments concerning the EA will be accepted for fifteen days after the announcement of the EA availability appears in the Newspaper.

A copy of the EA will also be sent to the applicant.

Beach Water Transmission Line
Right-of-Way
Environmental Assessment
Vicinity Map



TOWNSHIP 35 S RANGE 7 W

PAVED

ROCKED

NATURAL

PRIMITIVE

PRIVATE ROAD

INTERSTATE HIGHWAY

COUNTY ROAD

STATE ROAD

RESOURCE AREA BOUNDARY

COUNTY LINE

BLM O&C OWNERSHIP

BLM PD OWNERSHIP

BLM ACQUIRED OWNERSHIP

Water Line